

Amendments to the Claims:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

1. (currently amended) A method, implemented by a computer device, for providing search results, comprising:
 - receiving a search query;
 - retrieving one or more objects in response to the search query;
 - automatically determining whether the search query corresponds to at least one query theme of a group of query themes;
 - determining whether any of the one or more objects relates to a list of favored or non-favored sources;
 - ranking the one or more objects based on a result of the determination of whether the search query corresponds to at least one query theme and the determination whether any of the one or more objects relates to the list of favored or non-favored sources; and
 - providing the ranked one or more objects to a client.
2. (original) The method of claim 1 wherein the objects include web pages.
3. (canceled)

4. (currently amended) The method of claim ~~[[3]]~~ 1 wherein the ranking includes:

determining a score for those objects that are unrelated to the list of favored ~~[[and]]~~ or non-favored sources using a first group of parameters,

determining a score for those objects that relate to the list of favored or non-favored sources using the first group of parameters and an editorial opinion parameter, and

ranking the objects based on the determined scores.

5. (original) The method of claim 4 wherein the editorial opinion parameter causes the rank of those objects corresponding to favored sources to be increased and a rank of those objects corresponding to non-favored sources to be decreased.

6. (currently amended) The method of claim 1 wherein the automatically determining includes:

determining whether the search query corresponds to a query rule associated with each query theme.

7. (currently amended) The method of claim 1 wherein each query theme is classified into a first set of topics, and

wherein the automatically determining includes:

classifying the search query into a second set of topics, and

determining that the search query corresponds to a query theme when the second set of topics relates to the first set of topics associated with that query theme.

8. (currently amended) A computer device that provides search results, comprising:

means for receiving a search query that includes at least one search term;

means for retrieving one or more objects based on the at least one search term;

means for automatically determining whether the search query corresponds to at least one of a plurality of query themes;

means for determining whether any of the one or more objects relates to a list of favored or non-favored sources;

means for ranking the one or more objects based on whether the search query corresponds to at least one of the plurality of query themes and whether any of the one or more objects relates to the list of favored or non-favored sources; and

means for providing the ranked one or more objects to a client.

9. (currently amended) A computer-readable medium containing instructions and embodied on a tangible medium for controlling at least one processor to perform a method that provides search results, the method comprising:

receiving a search query that includes at least one search term;

obtaining one or more objects based on the at least one search term;
automatically determining whether the search query corresponds to at least one of a plurality of query themes;
determining whether any of the one or more objects relates to a list of favored or non-favored sources;
determining a score for each of the one or more objects based on whether the search query corresponds to at least one of the plurality of query themes and whether any of the one or more objects relates to the list of favored or non-favored sources; and
providing a ranked list containing the one or more objects to a client based on the determined score.

10. (currently amended) A server comprising:
a memory configured to store instructions and a group of query themes;
and
a processor configured to execute the instructions to:
obtain a search query that includes at least one search term,
retrieve one or more objects based on the at least one search term,
automatically determine whether the search query corresponds to at least one query theme of the group of query themes,
determine whether any of the one or more objects relates to a list of favored or non-favored sources,

rank the one or more objects based on whether the search query corresponds to at least one query theme of the group of query themes and whether any of the one or more objects relates to the list of favored or non-favored sources, and provide the ranked one or more objects to a client.

11. (currently amended) A method ~~for determining an editorial opinion parameter for use in ranking search results~~, comprising:

- developing one or more query themes;
- identifying, for each query theme, a first set of objects as favored objects;
- identifying, for each query theme, a second set of objects as non-favored objects;
- determining an editorial opinion parameter for each of the objects in the first and second sets;
- automatically using the editorial opinion parameter, via a computer device, to alter a ranking of a list of objects retrieved in response to a query; and
- providing, via the computer device, the altered ranked list of objects to a client.

12. (original) The method of claim 11 further comprising:

- determining, for each query theme, one or more rules for determining whether a search query satisfies the respective query theme.

13. (original) The method of claim 11 further comprising:
determining, for each query theme, one or more topics for determining
whether a search query satisfies the respective query theme.

14. (original) The method of claim 13 wherein the one or more topics are
selected from at least one hierarchical directory

15. (original) The method of claim 11 wherein the first and second sets of
objects are sets of web sites.

16. (original) The method of claim 15 wherein the identifying a first set of
objects includes:
identifying the first set of objects using host names.

17. (original) The method of claim 15 wherein the identifying a first set of
objects includes:
identifying the first set of objects using one or more Uniform Resource
Locator (URL) prefixes.

18. (original) The method of claim 15 wherein the identifying a first set of
objects includes:

classifying each query theme into a set of topics from a hierarchical directory, and

identifying host names listed under the set of topics as being in the first set of objects for that query theme.

19. (original) The method of claim 11 wherein the editorial opinion parameter causes a rank of an object to be increased or decreased based on whether the object is in the first or second set.

20. (currently amended) A computer-readable medium containing one or more instructions and embodied on a tangible medium for controlling at least one processor to perform a method for ~~determining an editorial opinion parameter for use in ranking search results~~ providing search results, the method comprising:

identifying, for each of a group of search query themes, a first set of objects as favored objects;

identifying, for each of the group of search query themes, a second set of objects as non-favored objects; [[and]]

determining an editorial opinion parameter for each of the objects in the first and second sets of objects;

automatically using at least one editorial opinion parameter of the determined editorial opinion parameters to alter a ranking of a list of objects retrieved in response to a query; and

providing the altered ranked list of objects to a client.

21. (currently amended) A system comprising:
a computer-readable tangible medium containing a data structure comprising:
a query theme field that stores at least one query theme,
a favored and non-favored sources field that stores information identifying favored and non-favored web sites for each query theme in the query theme field, and
an editorial parameter field that stores an editorial parameter for each favored and non-favored web site identified in the favored and non-favored sources field; and
at least one processor configured to use the data structure to rank objects retrieved in response to a query and provide the ranked objects to a client.

22. (previously presented) The system of claim 21 wherein the at least one query theme includes at least one of a query theme rule and a set of topics from one or more hierarchical directories.

23. (currently amended) A server comprising:
a memory configured to store a plurality of query themes, information identifying, for each of the plurality of query themes, at least one favored or non-favored

item associated with the query theme, and an editorial parameter associated with each favored and non-favored item; and

a processor configured to:

receive a search query comprising one or more terms,

retrieve items using the one or more terms,

determine a score for each of the retrieved items,

identify one of the plurality of query themes as matching the

search query,

determine, for each of the retrieved items, whether the retrieved item is associated with one of the favored or non-favored items associated with the one query theme, [[and]]

adjust, for each of the retrieved items, the score of the retrieved item when the retrieved item is determined to be associated with a favored or non-favored item, and

provide a ranked list of items to a client based on the adjusting.

24. (previously presented) The computer-readable medium of claim 9 wherein the objects include web pages.

25. (canceled)

26. (currently amended) The computer-readable medium of claim [[25]] 9 wherein the providing a ranked list includes:

determining a score for those objects that are unrelated to the list of favored [[and]] or non-favored sources using a first group of parameters,

determining a score for those objects that relate to the list of favored or non-favored sources using the first group of parameters and an editorial opinion parameter, and

ranking the objects based on the determined scores.

27. (previously presented) The computer-readable medium of claim 26 wherein the editorial opinion parameter causes the rank of those objects corresponding to favored sources to be increased and a rank of those objects corresponding to non-favored sources to be decreased.

28. (previously presented) The computer-readable medium of claim 9 wherein the determining whether the search query corresponds to at least one of a plurality of query themes includes:

determining whether the search query corresponds to a query rule associated with each query theme.

29. (previously presented) The computer-readable medium of claim 9 wherein each query theme is classified into a first set of topics, and

wherein the determining whether the search query corresponds to at least one of a plurality of query themes includes:

classifying the search query into a second set of topics, and
determining that the search query corresponds to a query theme when the second set of topics relates to the first set of topics associated with that query theme.

30. (canceled)

31. (currently amended) The server of claim ~~[[30]]~~ 10 wherein, when ranking the one or more objects, the processor is configured to:

determine a score for those objects that are unrelated to the list of favored ~~[[and]]~~ or non-favored sources using a first group of parameters,

determine a score for those objects that relate to the list of favored or non-favored sources using the first group of parameters and an editorial opinion parameter, and

rank the objects based on the determined scores.

32. (previously presented) The server of claim 31 wherein the editorial opinion parameter causes the rank of those objects corresponding to favored sources to be increased and a rank of those objects corresponding to non-favored sources to be decreased.

33. (previously presented) The computer-readable medium of claim 20 further comprising:

determining, for each search query theme in the group of search query themes, one or more rules for determining whether a search query satisfies the respective search query theme.

34. (previously presented) The computer-readable medium of claim 20 further comprising:

determining, for each search query theme in the group of search query themes, one or more topics for determining whether a search query satisfies the respective search query theme.

35. (previously presented) The computer-readable medium of claim 34 wherein the one or more topics are selected from at least one hierarchical directory.

36. (previously presented) The computer-readable medium of claim 20 wherein the first and second sets of objects are sets of web sites.

37. (previously presented) The computer-readable medium of claim 36 wherein the identifying a first set of objects includes:

identifying the first set of objects using host names.

38. (previously presented) The computer-readable medium of claim 36 wherein the identifying a first set of objects includes:
- identifying the first set of objects using one or more Uniform Resource Locator (URL) prefixes.
39. (previously presented) The computer-readable medium of claim 36 wherein the identifying a first set of objects includes:
- classifying each search query theme into a set of topics from a hierarchical directory, and
 - identifying host names listed under the set of topics as being in the first set of objects for that search query theme.
40. (previously presented) The computer-readable medium of claim 20 wherein the editorial opinion parameter causes a rank of an object to be increased or decreased based on whether the object is in the first or second set.